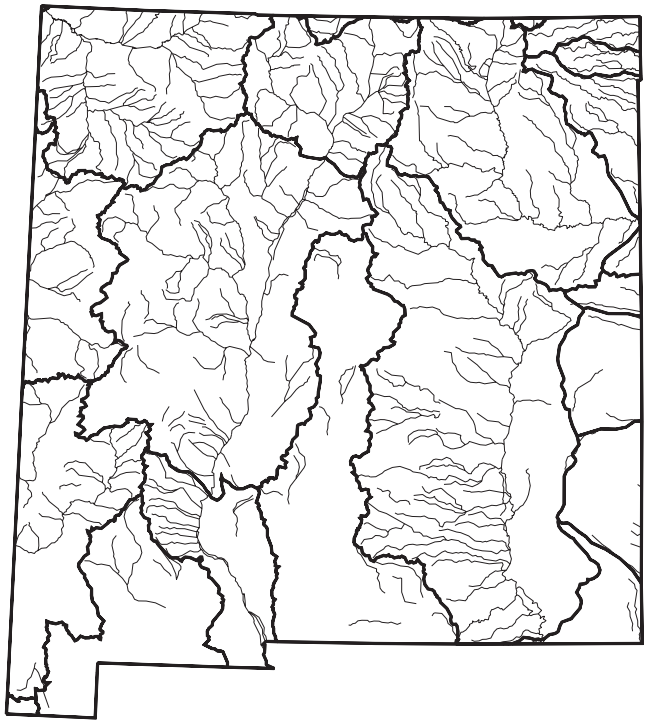
New Mexico



Basin Boundaries
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the New Mexico 1996 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

About 28% of New Mexico's surveyed stream miles have good water quality that fully supports aquatic life uses. Eighty-three percent of the surveyed river miles fully support swimming. The leading problems in streams include habitat alterations (such as removal of streamside vegetation), siltation, nutrients, and metals. Nonpoint sources are responsible for over 96% of the degradation in New Mexico's 3,438 impaired stream miles. Municipal wastewater treatment plants impair about 2% of the degraded waters (54 stream miles).

Agriculture and recreational activities are the primary sources of nutrients, siltation, reduced shoreline vegetation, and bank destabilization that impairs aquatic life use in 89% of New Mexico's surveyed lake acres. Mercury contamination from unknown sources appears in fish caught at 22 reservoirs. However, water and sediment samples from surveyed lakes and reservoirs have not detected high concentrations of mercury. Fish may contain high concentrations of mercury in waters with minute quantities of mercury because the process of biomagnification concentrates mercury in fish tissue.

Ground Water Quality

About 88% of the population of New Mexico depends on ground water for drinking water. The Environment Department has identified at least 1,745 cases of ground water contamination since 1927. The most common source of ground water contamination is small household septic tanks and cesspools. Leaking underground storage tanks, injection wells, landfills, surface impoundments, oil and gas production, mining and milling, dairies, and miscellaneous industrial sources also contaminate ground water in New Mexico. New Mexico operates a ground water discharger permit program that includes ground water standards for intentional discharges and a spill cleanup provision for other discharges.

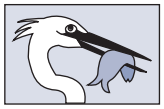
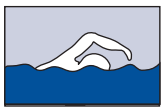
Programs to Restore Water Quality

New Mexico's Nonpoint Source Management Program contains a series of implementation milestones that were designed to establish goals while providing a method to measure progress and success of the program. Implementation consists of the coordination of efforts among NPS management agencies, promotion and implementation of best management practices, coordination of watershed projects, inspection and enforcement activities, consistency reviews, and education and outreach activities.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

New Mexico relies heavily on chemical and physical data to assess water quality. Fish tissue data became available in 1991, and data from biological surveys and bioassay tests were incorporated into the 1994 assessments where possible. The State also conducts extensive monitoring to determine the effectiveness of best management practices implemented under the Nonpoint Source Management Program. During the current 305(b) reporting cycle, New Mexico completed two special water quality surveys along the Rio Hondo and the Red River in Taos County.

Individual Use Support in New Mexico

Designated Use[a]	Total Miles Surveyed	Percent: Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Fair (Partially Supporting)	Poor (Not Supporting)	Poor (Not Attainable)
Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 110,741)[b]						
	4,115	17	11	66	6	0
	93	0	0	100	0	0
	352	83	0	17	0	0
Lakes (Total Acres = 997,467)						
	124,827	1	10	89	<1	0
	109,909	0	<1	100	0	0
	-	-	-	-	-	-

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

[a] A subset of New Mexico's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the State's 305(b) report for a full description of the State's uses.

[b] Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.